

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRUSSE 04948 291806Z

64

ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00 L-03 H-03 SCS-03 SCA-01

PA-03 PRS-01 USIE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 RSR-01

/072 W

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O R 291726Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8547

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMCONSUL ANTWERP

AMCONSUL AMSTERDAM

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

UNCLAS BRUSSELS 4948

3.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: ETRN, BE

SUBJECT: CIVAIR - STRANDEE SITRIP

REF: A. BRUSSELS 4886; B. STATE 166119

1. BELGIAN CHARTER CARRIER INFORMED EMBASSY AUGUST 29 THAT EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY POMAIR (A) CANCELLING ALL RPT ALL FLIGHTS TO US AND (B) ABANDONING ALL RESPONSIBILITY RETURN MAJORITY POMAIR TICKET HOLDERS TO US.

2. POMAIR THEREBY ABANDONING PLAN UTILIZE EMPTY SEATS ON FLIGHTS TO US TO RETURN STRANDEES FROM GREAT LAKES AREA WHO BOOKED THROUGH CANADA CHARTERS OF TORONTO AND GRAND RAPIDS. AUGUST 29 FLIGHT CONTRACTED FOR BY DEWALD TRAVEL (PARA 2 OF REF A) HAS BEEN CANCELLED AND THERE NOW ARE NO OTHER FLIGHTS
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SCHEDULED FOR THE US. POMAIR DOES PLAN FILL UP THE SEPTEMBER

1 FLIGHT TO FREEPORT VIA BANGOR, MAINE, WITH UP TO 30 STRANDEES, BUT THIS WILL NOT MATERIALLY AFFECT THE PROBLEM SINCE THERE ARE CURRENTLY 160 ON THE WAITING LIST FOR THESE SPACES AND SEVERAL HUNDRED OTHER EXPECTED TO ARRIVE OVER THE WEEKEND.

3. CURRENT POMAIR POSITION ON THESE STRANDEES DIRECTLY CONTRARY TO ASSURANCES GIVEN CAB BY DIRGEN DUMORTIER (REF B). ALSO CONTRARY TO INFORMATION GIVEN POMAIR TICKET HOLDERS WHO HAVE TELEPHONED FROM VARIOUS PARTS OF EUROPE. THEY HAVE BEEN TOLD TO COME TO OSTEND AND THAT POMAIR WOULD GET THEM HOME. SUCH PERSONS ARRIVING AT OSTEND AIRPORT ARE NOW REPORTEDLY GREETED WITH A POSTED NOTICE THAT SAYS QUOTE...POMAIR REGRETS THAT THEY CANNOT REPATRIATE ANYONE END QUOTE.

4. AUGUST 29 BEGAN WITH APPROXIMATELY 30 AMCITS PHYSICALLY PRESENT IN OSTEND AIRPORT BUT BY 1700 OVER 50 HAD ARRIVED. EQUAL OR GREATER NUMBER CANADIANS CITS AT AIRPORT BUT THEY AGREED TO RETURN TO BRUSSELS ON POMAIR BUSES IN COMPANY CANADIAN EMBASSY OFFICER. SAME OFFER OF TRANSPORT MADE TO AMCITS BUT THEY HAVE REFUSED TO LEAVE AIRPORT. AT EMBASSY SUGGESTION POMAIR AGREED PROVIDE HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS AND FOOD FOR TONIGHT AND EMBOFFS WILL MEET WITH AMCITS AT OSTEND MORNING AUGUST 30.

5. PMAIR BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPRESENTATIVE PIERRE SEVERYS CALLED EMBASSY TO EXPLAIN POMAIR POSITION. STRANDEES ARE LARGELY TRAVELLERS WHO ARRIVED IN EUROPE ON POMAIR FLIGHTS IN JULY. AFTER ARRIVAL POMAIR DISCOVERED THEY WERE NOT CHARTERWORTHY. SEVERYS CLAIMS POMAIR AMERICAN LAWYER BOWENS APPROACHED CAB FOR SPECIAL PERMISSION TO FLY THESE PASSENGERS BUT REPORTED ON EVENING AUGUST 28 THAT CAB HAD REFUSED. POMAIR IS STILL WILLING TO ARRANGE FLIGHT IF CAB WILL GRANT PERMISSION.

6. EMBASSY HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH SABENA WHICH IS CONSIDERING POSSIBILITY OF SPECIAL CHARTER FLIGHT (AT REDUCED CHARTER RATES) FOR AMCITS STRANDED IN BELGIUM. IF SABENA INTERESTED THEY WILL CALL ON CAB TO DISCUSS AND REQUEST PERMISSION.

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7. ACTION REQUESTED: AS NUMBER STRANDEES NOW POSE SERIOUS POTENTIAL PROBLEM AND LIKELY INCREASE, WE SUGGEST DEPARTMENT AND CAB CONSIDER POSSIBILITY SPECIAL POMAIR OR SABENA FLIGHT. WOULD APPRECIATE GUIDANCE BY OPENING OF BUSINESS (LOCAL AUGUST 30.CROWLEY

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Draft Date: 29 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
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